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HISTORY OF THE VISUAL EDUCATION

One hot day in August, 1942, a desk piled with a few magazines, pictures torn from old calendars, and a scissor were given to me in the corner of Superintendent's office to develop visual resources for Manzanar Schools.

In September, I was moved to 20-15 library. There my staff of workers were formed: Kango Takamura, artist; Toyo Miyatake, Assistant Director; and Carole Kageyama, secretary.

Our department began with a pile of old magazines for a picture file, one live owl, and a mouse. While we collected insects to be mounted, Mr. Takamura painted the local wild flowers.

When we opened our present museum at 8-15, in October we began to write to various institutions and manufacturers for free materials on Visual Education which soon began to arrive, enabling us to have enough things to be displayed on one table.

In our early days the walls and the floor were unlined. Dust and wind blew through the open seams of our building. We worked withour coats on because the heat was inadequate. To add to our misery the owl, the sparrow, and the snake died of cold. The mouse escaped and ate up our collection of insects; yet, we were not discouraged. We wandered around the center collecting everything from bugs to minerals.

After five months of hard toil, our first exhibition on December 5, 1942, was a great success. Since then, we have held special exhibits every month.

Today we have a permanent exhibit of local minerals, plants, wood carvings, posters, and handicrafts, and also a picture library of approximately four thousand mounted and unmounted pictures, models, slides, diagrams, globes, and other visual aids.

The Manzanar public has had opportunity to enjoy several interesting special exhibits such as, Fine Arts, Point Rationing, Relocation Week, Traveling exhibit, Art Exhibit, Know your Manzanar, World of Science and etc.

With the newly selected Board of Directors, we know that the day will be here soon when we will have a Visual Education Museum of which Manzanar can be proud.

Kiyotsugu Tsuchiya
Director, Visual Education